

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Organizing and Conducting Cooking Demonstrations



ENGINE: Empowering New Generations to Improve Nutrition and Economic opportunities

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1. Introduction

ENGINE has been providing technical assistance to support effective implementation of direct nutrition services. As part of promoting maternal, infant and young child feeding practices, cooking demonstration has been practiced at farmers training center, with health development army and other places. Cooking demonstration is also practiced by health extension workers as part of the health extension program. Given the fact that cooking demonstration is a key strategy for promotion of optimal feeding practices, standardizing the way it is done has been found to be important. This standard operating procedures (SOP) is developed to serve as a guidance for conducting cooking demonstration at different places of ENGINE supported woredas and kebeles

2. Purpose of this document

The purpose of this standard operating procedure (SOP) is:

- To establish a common understanding among ENGINE staff on how to organize and conduct a cooking demonstration
- To clarify roles and responsibilities of ENGINE staff in organizing and conducting a cooking demonstration
- To serve as a guidance for conducting cooking demonstrations at different places and occasions
- To guide the recording and reporting at the cooking demonstration sites

3. What is a cooking demonstration?

A cooking demonstration is facilitating a practice of preparing a diversified and locally available food that is of appropriate consistency and amount required for infants, children and adults

4. Purpose of conducting a cooking demonstration

Conducting cooking demonstration has the following purposes

- To transfer knowledge and skill to participants about how to prepare a food that is diversified and of appropriate consistency and amount for infants, children and adults

- To influence mothers, grandmothers, fathers and other community members to practice optimal infant and young child feeding practices (i.e. consumption of a diversified food that is of appropriate consistency and amount for the infants, children and adults)

5. How to organize and conduct a cooking demonstration

5.1. Preparations needed to conduct cooking demonstration

When a cooking demonstration is planned the following preparations should be made ahead of time

- Make sure that all utensils are available (at a minimum the following should be available: cooking stove (or kerosene stove,), cooking pot, small bowls, chopping board, coffee cups for measuring amount of food, knife, spoon, plate, ladle, water container, wood and match if there is no kerosene or electricity; table or if table is not available clean plastic to cover the ground)
- Soap or ash, clean water and clean cooking area
- Recipe (this should contain **at least 4** of the 6 food groups plus iodized salt). As much as possible participants of the cooking demonstration shall be advised/convinced to bring the different food groups from themselves (one person may contribute on type of food group). As an example, the following local foods are needed: Flour made from cereal, flour made from legume, fruits and vegetables (not more than ½ kg each), egg, milk, meat, oil or butter, and iodized salt. In addition to staple foods, effort should be made to avail animal source foods and fruits and vegetables during each cooking demonstration
- Involve/inform the local administrative authorities about the plan
- Decide who to participate and inform participants 10 days ahead of the cooking demonstration day. Focus shall be given to participate women with children between 6-23 months and pregnant women
- Decide on the group and number of participants. At each cooking demonstration it is advisable if the groups are not more than 2 with a maximum of 25 participants each; a total of 50 participants
- Inform a health extension worker, development army head and agricultural development agent to be part of the session

- Make ready the recording and reporting tools (attendance sheet, documentation sheet, monitoring checklist, and case study/success story sheet)
- Decide where to conduct the cooking demonstration. This decision should consider the distance that participants have to travel (particularly women with children of 6-23 months and pregnant women; and the convenience of the area (cleanliness, able to accommodate participants; no disturbance; if possible it shall be in a room or have a roof to prevent rain and hot air condition)

5.2. Who should participate?

Major focus of the cooking demonstration in ENGINE program is to promote optimal maternal, infant and young child feeding practices. To this end, focus should be given to the following participants

- Women with children of 6-23 months of age
- Pregnant women
- Health extension worker and development army heads
- Health center staff (if the cooking demonstration is at health center)
- Agriculture development agent (only during promotion of nutrition-sensitive agriculture)

Depending on their time and availability husbands, grandmothers, kebele leaders, health center staff, woreda health office focal persons and other community members could also participate in the cooking demonstration

5.3. Where to conduct a cooking demonstration?

A cooking demonstration could be conducted at health center, farmers' training center, school, under a tree, in a farmer's house or any other place. In selecting the place, the following should be considered:

- Cleanliness of the area
- An area where clean water supply is available
- An area which is center (not too far) that participants, particularly women with <2 children could easily come and participate

- An area that can prevent rain or very hot weather (preferably a room if available)
- Able to accommodate participants
- A place that has no or minimal disturbance

5.4. What type of recipe shall be prepared and for which group?

Different types of foods could be prepared but the recipe to be prepared should be either for:

- Children 6-23 months of age: to address the varying consistency and amount of food required for children, this shall involve preparation of recipe for two different age groups-one for children 6-11 months and the other for 12-24 months
- Pregnant or lactating women

In a cooking demonstration that is promoted by development agents as part of the nutrition-sensitive agriculture, the food to be prepared shall be a family food. DAs shouldn't be tasked with facilitation of a cooking demonstration that targets children 6-23 months of age or pregnant and lactating women

5.5. How to facilitate a cooking demonstration?

When conducting a cooking demonstration, the role of ENGINE or government staff should be only facilitation; the participants shall practice the cooking by themselves

For effective learning by participants, a facilitator (ENGINE or Government staff) shall exercise the following:

Before the start of the cooking demonstration

- Welcome participants and introduce the purpose and duration of the session
- Explain the process of the cooking demonstration and the responsibility of participants
- Explain the types of recipes to be prepared. Participants can be grouped in to two to prepare food for children of 6-11 months and 12-24 months of age. Describe briefly to participants the recommended consistency, amount, frequency, and diversity of food for the two groups of children

- Inform participants to select a group leader when they prepare the recipes
- Inform participants the importance of hand washing, using clean water, use clean utensils (wash utensils) and use clean surface
- Advise each group to start cooking the food and finish it within 1 hr
- Inform and convince participants not to overcook vegetables by telling them the loss of vitamins during overcooking.

After the cooking demonstration

- Ask the rest of participants to see and taste the food of each group?
- Facilitate a discussion with the following questions
 - Are these types of foods edible or culturally acceptable to be consumed by children or adults in our community? If no, why? Correct misconceptions if any
 - Ask all participants the difference in consistency, amount and diversity of the two recipes?
 - What is the recommended consistency, amount and diversity of food for each of these groups of children? Correct misconceptions if any?
 - Ask participants to give the prepared food to their children or consume by themselves (if the food is prepared for adults) at the spot. Address challenges/barriers if any
 - Provide key information on the importance of consuming a food that is diversified and of appropriate consistency and amount
 - Provide key information on the importance of hand washing, using clean water, use clean utensils (wash utensils) and use clean surface
 - Ask participants if they can prepare such type of food at their home. Address barriers of preparing such type of food at home
 - Advise participants to share their neighbors the knowledge and skills they learnt from the cooking demonstration
 - Thank participants and close the session

5.6. Where to conduct a cooking demonstration?

A cooking demonstration could be conducted at health center, farmers' training center, school, under a tree, in a farmer's house or any other place. In selecting the place, the following should be considered:

- Cleanliness of the area
- An area where clean water supply is available
- An area which is center (not too far) that participants, particularly women with <2 children could easily come and participate
- An area that can prevent rain or very hot weather (preferably a room if available)
- Able to accommodate participants
- A place that has no or minimal disturbance

5.7. Frequency of conducting cooking demonstration

Based on the time and resource they have, ENGINE regional team can decide the frequency of conducting cooking demonstrations. But it is proposed that a minimum of 1 cooking demonstration (either at FTC, health post or kebele-with HEWs and HDAs) will be conducted in each woreda quarterly

5.8. Role and responsibilities of ENGINE staff in organizing and conducting cooking demonstration

ENGINE staff, particularly zonal health coordinators, will have the following roles in organizing and conducting a cooking demonstration

- Develop a plan to conduct cooking demonstrations and facilitate each cooking demonstration
- Plan a cooking demonstration appropriately. Ensure that all the above preparations are made during planning of each cooking demonstration. In terms of the utensils and food needed for a cooking demonstration, effort

should be made to discuss with health extension workers, health development army and kebele leaders to use all materials from community members. Zonal health coordinators should visit and observe how health extension workers conduct cooking demonstration at community level and build on such approaches. But when it is difficult to bring the utensils from community members, one set of basic utensils could be purchased and used at farmers' training center, health center, school or other places

- Document the key discussion issues, misconceptions from participants, and any change in perception among participants during each cooking demonstration (using a documentation sheet)
- Conduct random monitoring visits with health extension workers to households who participated in cooking demonstrations and observe whether there is any change in feeding practices. Address any barriers or difficulties at the spot and document findings of the visit to use as a key issue for discussions during future cooking demonstrations

6. Monitoring the effect of cooking demonstrations

- Monitoring the effect of cooking demonstrations is important for the following purposes:
 - To understand whether cooking demonstrations are influencing feeding practices, particularly among children of <2 years of age
 - Identify any challenges in exercising the feeding practices promoted during cooking demonstrations
 - Document good practices and challenges to use as lessons to revisit future cooking demonstrations
- This monitoring visit shall be done once a quarter by visiting households together with health extension workers
- The monitoring visit shall be conducted as part of the comprehensive visit that is done to monitor implementation of community level nutrition services supported by ENGINE